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## **HECB Announces College Access Challenge Grant Recipients**

**OLYMPIA**— Four non-profit organizations in Washington will receive College Access Challenge Grants to help prepare more low-income, minority and underprivileged students for college, the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) announced today.

The two-year, federally funded grants total \$760,000. Organizations selected by HECB to receive the grants are:

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| • <b>College Success Foundation (CSF), Issaquah</b>                          | <b>\$337,500</b> |
| • <b>Community Foundation of North Central Washington (CFNCW), Wenatchee</b> | <b>\$117,347</b> |
| • <b>Metropolitan Development Council (MDC), Tacoma</b>                      | <b>\$120,000</b> |
| • <b>Northwest Education Loan Association (NELA), Seattle</b>                | <b>\$185,205</b> |

The goals of the College Access Challenge Grant Program include helping schools provide information to low-income, first-generation, and minority students and families about financial aid and the college-application process.

Such efforts include support for the College Bound Scholarship Program, which offers the promise of college tuition to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who meet income requirements and fulfill a pledge to stay in school, demonstrate good citizenship and graduate. Approximately 56,000 students are eligible for the program in Washington.

Gov. Chris Gregoire directed the HECB to administer the \$1.1 million in College Access Challenge Grant money received by Washington in FY 2008-09.

The *2008 Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education in Washington* calls for creating higher expectations for K-12 students and making college affordable and easy to access. The successful grantees have proposed ways to deliver services and meet both the goals of the Master Plan and the College Access Challenge Grant Program.

CSF will use its grant money to conduct sign-up activities and other promotional efforts for the College Bound Scholarship Program. The Foundation also will work to create a network for sharing information and best practices on access to college.

CFNCW will collaborate with Wenatchee GEAR UP to provide services to 900 middle and high schools students and provide support to those in the College Bound Scholarship with grade

specific information and advice, match low-income and first generation students with community mentors, and work with parents of students enrolled in the College Bound Scholarship in conjunction with other programs.

NELA intends to triple the number of students in the I'm Going to College program, a college awareness curriculum for 6<sup>th</sup> graders; increase the College Goal Sunday locations statewide to help low-income students and their families fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and expand the reach to College Bound Scholarship age students through the Washington KnowHow2Go campaign, a national media campaign to promote better awareness and aspiration to college.

MDC will work exclusively with the Tacoma Public School District to increase number of eligible students who sign up for the College Bound scholarship and complete college preparation portfolio. It will help implement College Bound Scholarship activities and provide personalized services through the experiences it has gained from managing the federal TRIO programs, programs designed specifically to work with low-income, first generation students for college.

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